

THE ROLE MODELS

Harold Reynolds, a baseball analyst for the MLB Network (and formerly with ESPN), was an all-star second baseman for the Seattle Mariners in his playing days.

In an article in *Sports Spectrum*, he writes about growing up in Corvallis, Ore. “There was an NBA player named Gus Williams, who tied his shoes in back instead of in front, like normal,” Reynolds said. “I thought that was so cool. So I started tying my shoes in the back. I wanted to be like Gus. He wore number 10; I wore number 10. He wore one wrist band; I wore one wrist band.”

One day, Reynolds was lying in bed, “and my stomach was killing me,” he related. “I noticed that it wasn’t my sports hero, Gus Williams, who came to my room to take care of me. It was my mother.”

Reynolds said that experience was a wake-up call for him. “That’s when I began to understand the difference between heroes and role models. I stopped looking at athletic accomplishments to determine who I wanted to pattern my life after. Instead, I tried to emulate people with strong character who were doing things of lasting value.”

Reynolds is exactly right in his opinion. Every time I visit a nursing center, I find it to be filled with heroes – men and women who give unselfishly of their time and talents to deliver care, hugs and smiles to our residents. It is not unusual for associates to do the “and then some” in their service – baking a cake, buying a sweater, mending clothes for the elderly in their building.

These are the role models – folks who seek to make the lives of others better.

I salute them – each and every one.

– Beecher Hunter